

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An ink set comprising at least three inks each containing a colorant and an aqueous medium, wherein in a fading test under conditions that cause fading corresponding to pseudo-indoor sunlight fading through a window for 3 years or more, respective images produced with the respective inks have the same  $\Delta E$  or have difference in  $\Delta E$  that are 10 or less in a CIELAB color space display system, and each of the respective images has a residual ratio of reflection density of 70% or more.

2. An ink set comprising at least two inks each containing a colorant and an aqueous medium, wherein in a fading test under conditions that cause fading corresponding to pseudo-indoor sunlight fading through a window for 3 years or more, respective images produced with the respective inks have the same  $\Delta E$  or have a difference in  $\Delta E$  that is 10 or less in a CIELAB color space display system, and each of the respective images has a residual ratio of reflection density of 80% or more.

3. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein in the fading test, light exposure is 6000 klux·hr or more.

4. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the conditions in the fading test are set according to the ISO 10977 standards.

5. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the images produced with the inks are formed on a recording medium comprising a substrate and a porous particle layer or a porous polymer layer formed on the substrate.

6. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein at least two of the inks have a same color tone, and different amounts of the colorant.

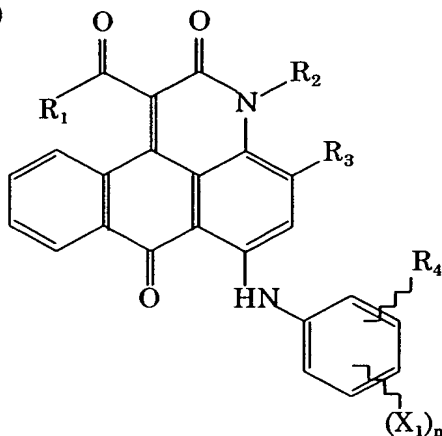
7. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the inks include at least two color inks selected from the group consisting of yellow, magenta and cyan inks.

8. An ink set according to Claim 7, wherein for at least one of the colors of inks, the ink comprises a first ink and a second ink having the same color tone, and wherein the second ink has a lower colorant content than the first ink.

9. An ink set according to Claim 7, wherein the magenta ink comprises at least one dye represented by the

following formula (I) as a colorant:

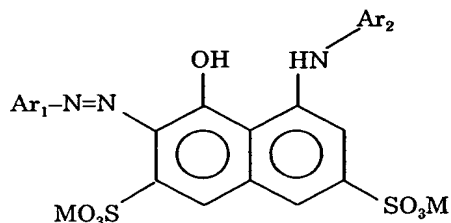
Formula (I)



wherein  $R_1$  represents a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group, or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group;  $R_2$  and  $R_4$  independently represent a hydrogen atom or a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group;  $R_3$  is selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group, and a halogen atom;  $X_1$  represents a carboxyl group or a salt thereof, or a sulfonic acid group or a salt thereof; and  $n$  represents 1 or 2.

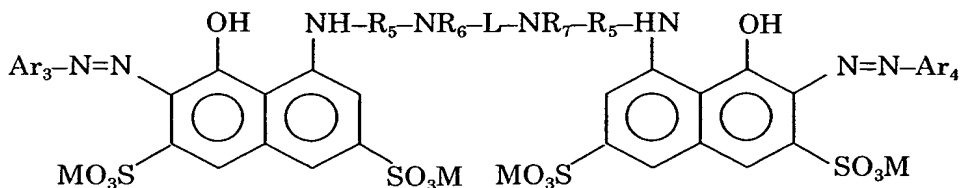
10. An ink set according to Claim 9, wherein the magenta ink further comprises at least one dye selected from the group consisting of dyes represented by the following formulae (II), dyes represented by formula (III), and dyes having a xanthene structure as a colorant:

Formula (II)



wherein  $Ar_1$  represents a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group, or a substituted or unsubstituted naphthyl group;  $Ar_2$  is selected from the group consisting of an acetyl group, a benzoyl group, a 1,3,5-triazinyl group, a  $SO_2C_6H_5$  group and a  $SO_2-C_6H_4-CH_3$  group; and M represents a counter ion of the sulfonic acid group selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal, an ammonium and an organic ammonium;

Formula (III)



wherein  $Ar_3$  and  $Ar_4$  independently represent a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group, or a substituted or unsubstituted naphthyl group, at least one of  $Ar_3$  and  $Ar_4$  having as a substituent a carboxyl group or a salt thereof, or a sulfonic acid group or a salt thereof; M represents a counter ion of a sulfonic acid group selected from the group

consisting of a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal, an ammonium and an organic ammonium;  $R_5$  represents 1,3,5-triazinediyl group; each of  $R_6$  and  $R_7$  is independently selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkenyl group, a substitute or unsubstituted aralkyl group, and an atomic group necessary for forming a perhydroxyazine ring together with N; and L represents a bivalent organic coupling group.

11. An ink set according to Claim 7, wherein the cyan ink comprises at least one dye having a copper phthalocyanine structure as a colorant.

12. An ink set according to Claim 11, wherein the dye having a copper phthalocyanine structure is Direct Blue 199.

13. An ink set according to Claim 7, wherein the yellow ink comprises Direct Yellow 132 as a colorant.

14. An ink set according to Claim 7, wherein the magenta ink comprises a dye represented by formula (I) and at least one dye selected from the group consisting of dyes represented by formula (II), dyes represented by formula (III), and a dye having a xanthene structure as a colorant,

and wherein the cyan ink comprises Direct Blue 199 as a colorant, and the yellow ink comprises Direct Yellow 132 as a colorant.

15. An ink set according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein each of the inks is used for ink jet recording.

16. An ink jet recording method comprising a step of discharging inks from orifices according to a recording signal to record an image on a recording medium, wherein the inks constitute an ink set according to Claim 15.

17. An ink jet recording method according to Claim 16, wherein the discharging step comprises the sub-step of applying thermal energy to the inks.

18. A recording unit comprising an ink container containing the respective inks constituting an ink set according to Claim 15, and a head section for discharging the respective inks.

19. A recording unit according to Claim 18, wherein the head section comprises a head for discharging the respective inks by applying thermal energy to the inks.

20. An ink cartridge comprising an ink container containing the respective inks constituting an ink set according to Claim 1 or 2.

21. An ink jet recording apparatus comprising a recording unit comprising an ink container containing the respective inks constituting an ink set according to Claim 15, and a head section for discharging the respective inks.

22. An ink jet recording apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the head section discharges the respective inks by applying thermal energy to the inks.

23. An ink jet recording apparatus comprising an ink cartridge provided with ink containers containing inks constituting the ink set according to Claim 15, and a recording head for discharging the respective inks.

24. An ink jet recording apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the recording head discharges the respective inks by applying thermal energy to the inks.